



# **Final Environmental Assessment**

## **Estrella Freeway, SR 303L Happy Valley Road to 43rd Avenue**

**Project No. S 303-A-200  
TRACS No. 303L MA 003 H5946 01L**



Arizona Department of Transportation  
Environmental Planning Group  
205 South 17th Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona

**November 2006**

**FINAL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

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**Happy Valley Road to 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

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**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**November 2006**

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION  
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING GROUP  
205 South 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007**

**FINAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**for**

**ESTRELLA FREEWAY, SR 303L  
Happy Valley Road to 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
(Segments 1, 2, and 4)**

**Project No. S 303-A-200  
TRACS No. 303L MA 003 H5946 01L**

**November 2006**

Approved by: Thor Anderson Date: 11-29-06  
Thor Anderson, Manager  
Environmental Planning Group  
Arizona Department of Transportation

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This Final Environmental Assessment for Segments 1, 2, and 4 (Happy Valley Road to 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) of the Estrella Freeway, State Route 303L (known as Loop 303) has been prepared in accordance with the provisions and requirements of Section 3.2.4 of the *Action Plan of the Arizona Department of Transportation for State-Funded Highway Projects*.

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## **1.0 PREFACE**

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### **1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is proposing to construct an extension of the Estrella Freeway, State Route (SR) 303L, known as Loop 303, along a new alignment from Happy Valley Road northward and eastward to the future 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and to construct a direct connection from this new route to existing SR 74 (Carefree Highway). The project is located in Maricopa County, Arizona, in the northwestern portion of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area. A related project, connection of this Loop 303 section to Interstate 17 with a system interchange, is addressed in a separate Environmental Assessment.

### **1.2 SUMMARY OF THE ENVIROMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

A Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for this project was approved in August 2006. A public hearing was held on September 6, 2006 at the Sandra Day O'Connor High School at 25250 North 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona to receive public comments. Copies of the DEA were available for review at the ADOT Environmental Planning Group offices, on the ADOT website, at the Phoenix Public Library, Juniper Branch and the Peoria Public Library, Sunrise Mountain Branch.

The public comment period for the DEA began on August 22, 2006 and ended on September 20, 2006. Comments on the DEA were received by letter, on written comment sheets submitted at the public hearing, and through comments taken and transcribed by the court reporter in attendance at the hearing.

The purpose of this Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) is to respond to the comments received during the public and agency review period and to provide additions and changes to the DEA where necessary. With the completion and approval of this FEA, Arizona Department of Transportation environmental requirements for this project have been met.

### **1.3 GUIDE TO THIS DOCUMENT**

This FEA is presented in addendum format and must be considered in conjunction with the DEA.

The following section of this FEA includes the complete list of mitigation measures that will be implemented for this project. Mitigation measures are subdivided according to the responsible

party: ADOT design engineers, ADOT Phoenix Construction District, and the construction contractor.

The FEA also includes text changes to the DEA that were made in response to public and agency comments as well as updates to ADOT policy that have occurred since the studies conducted for the DEA and clarifications on the project description.

Some changes are made universally to the DEA text. Throughout the document, references to the “preferred alternative” are changed to “selected alternative”. Uses of the verb “would” are changed to “will,” when referring to the selected alternative as well as to associated design features and the affected environment and environmental consequences. In the mitigation section, all references to “would” in connection with design and ADOT responsibilities have been changed to “will” and references to the contractor’s responsibilities have been changed to “shall”. References to 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue have been modified to include its designation as “Pyramid Parkway”. Section 2.0, Mitigation Measures, reflects the final wording of these measures as modified by public and agency comments on the DEA.

In this document, specific changes to text (other than those described above) are referenced to the page on which the text is found in the DEA. At the beginning of each of these edits, the original DEA section titles are given for the readers’ orientation. DEA text that is deleted is shown by strikethrough (~~strikethrough~~), and new text that is added is shown in *italics*.

Appendix A provides a table that includes public and agency comments received during the DEA public review period and public hearing, along with ADOT responses.

Appendix B is a copy of the public hearing transcript. In order to provide continuity and present the overall concept to the public, the public hearing was a joint hearing on this project with the Federal Highway Administration’s Draft Environmental Assessment for the adjacent connection of this portion of SR 303L to Interstate Highway 17 at Lone Mountain Road; therefore, the transcript addresses items associated with both projects.

## **2.0 MITIGATION MEASURES**

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Mitigation measures have been defined to avoid or minimize the environmental impacts of the preferred alignment. These mitigation measures are not subject to change without prior written approval from the Arizona Department of Transportation.

### **Arizona Department of Transportation Design Responsibilities**

1. During final design, coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will occur to complete the jurisdictional delineation to formally define whether washes are jurisdictional waters of the United States, and identify permit requirements under Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act. (refer to DEA page 4-10)
2. Removal or disturbance of vegetation will be minimized through project design as practicable. All disturbed soils, not landscaped or otherwise permanently stabilized by construction, will be seeded using species native to the project vicinity. (DEA page 4-13)
3. Protected native plants within the construction limits will be affected by the project; therefore, the Arizona Department of Transportation's Roadside Development Section will notify the Arizona Department of Agriculture at least 60 days prior to the start of construction so that the Arizona Department of Agriculture can determine the disposition of these plants. (DEA page 4-18)
4. Project features will be constructed of materials that complement the surrounding landscape's colors and textures. In addition, retaining walls associated with any rock cuts will be compatible with the rugged form, textures, colors, and lines of the surrounding setting and with those of the new retaining walls, to the extent practicable. (DEA page 4-26)
5. Project facilities will be designed to blend with the desert nature of their surroundings, to the extent practicable. (DEA page 4-26)
6. During final design, the Arizona Department of Transportation project manager will contact the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group hazardous materials coordinator (602-712-7767 or 7760) to determine the need for additional site assessment. (DEA page 4-43)
7. The Arizona Department of Transportation Utility and Railroad Engineering Section will investigate potential utility conflicts during the final design phase. (DEA page 4-56)

8. Because one or more acres of land will be disturbed, the Arizona Department of Transportation Roadside Development Section will determine who will prepare the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. (DEA pages 4-10 to 4-11)
9. Culverts will be designed and sized to minimize the effects of habitat fragmentation by providing opportunities for movement of wildlife across the proposed project. As identified in the Design Concept Report, culverts in the project area would range in size from 24 inches to 10 feet by 12 feet. During final design, Arizona Department of Transportation will coordinate with Arizona Game and Fish Department to discuss habitat connectivity opportunities. (DEA page 4-14)

### **Arizona Department of Transportation Phoenix Construction District Responsibilities**

1. Because more than one acre will be disturbed during construction, an Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit will be required. The Arizona Department of Transportation Phoenix Construction District Office and the contractor will submit the Notice of Intent and the Notice of Termination to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (DEA pages 4-10 to 4-11)
2. The Phoenix Construction District will provide a construction notice to adjacent residents and businesses at least two weeks prior to construction. (DEA page 4-54)

### **Contractor Responsibilities**

1. All discarded waste (including but not limited to human waste, trash, debris, oil drums, fuel, ashes, equipment, concrete, and chemicals) generated during construction activities shall be removed and/or disposed of according to federal and state regulations. (DEA page 4-42)
2. The contractor shall employ a qualified biologist to complete a pre-construction survey for Sonoran desert tortoise 48 hours prior to construction in areas that will be disturbed. Within 48 hours of survey completion, the contractor shall contact the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group at 602-712-7760 to provide survey results and arrange for delivery of survey documentation. (this document, page 9)
3. If any Sonoran desert tortoises are encountered during construction, the contractor shall adhere to the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Guidelines for Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered on Development Projects, found in Appendix C of the Draft Environmental Assessment. (this document, page 9)



4. The contractor shall employ a qualified biologist permitted to complete a pre-construction survey for burrowing owl 48 hours prior to construction in areas that will be disturbed. The contractor shall contact the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group at 602-712-7760 to obtain survey results. (this document, page 10)
5. If any burrowing owls are located during preconstruction surveys or construction, the contractor shall employ a biologist holding a permit from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to capture and remove all owls from the project area as appropriate. (this document, page 10)
6. Because more than one acre will be disturbed during construction, an Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit will be required. The Arizona Department of Transportation Phoenix Construction District Office and contractor shall submit the Notice of Intent and the Notice of Termination to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (DEA pages 4-10 to 4-11)
7. All disturbed soils that will not be landscaped or otherwise permanently stabilized by construction shall be seeded using species native to the project vicinity. (DEA page 4-19)
8. To prevent the introduction of invasive species seeds, all construction equipment shall be washed prior to entering the construction site. To prevent invasive species seeds from leaving the site, the contractor shall inspect all equipment and remove attached plant/vegetation debris prior to leaving the construction site. (DEA page 4-19)
9. Construction of the project shall comply with Maricopa County Air Quality Rule 310 – Fugitive Dust Sources and any required air quality permits. All dust-producing surfaces shall be watered or otherwise stabilized to reduce short-term impacts associated with an increase in particulate matter attributable to construction activity. (DEA page 4-30)

### **Standard Specifications Included as Mitigation Measures**

1. According to the Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 107, Legal Relations and Responsibility to Public, Subsection 05, Archaeological Features*, “When archaeological, historical, or paleontological features are encountered or discovered during any activity related to the construction of the project, the contractor shall stop work immediately at that location and shall take all reasonable steps to secure the preservation of those resources and notify the Engineer. The Engineer will direct how to protect the features. The contractor shall not resume work until it is so directed by the Engineer.” (DEA page 4-47)

2. According to the Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 104, Scope of Work, Subsection 08, Prevention of Air and Noise Pollution*, “The contractor shall control, reduce, remove or prevent air pollution in all its forms, including air contaminants, in the performance of the contractor’s work.” (DEA page 4-29)
3. According to the Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 104, Scope of Work, Subsection 08, Prevention of Air and Noise Pollution*, “The contractor shall comply with all local sound control and noise level rules, regulations and ordinances which apply to any work performed pursuant to the contract. Each internal combustion engine used for any purpose on the work or related to the work shall be equipped with a muffler of a type recommended by the manufacturer. No internal combustion engine shall be operated on the work without its muffler being in good working condition.” (DEA page 4-39)
4. According to Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 104, Scope of Work, Subsection 09, Prevention of Landscape Defacement; Protection of Streams, Lakes, and Reservoirs*, “The contractor shall give special attention to the effect of its operations upon the landscape and shall take special care to maintain natural surroundings undamaged.” (DEA page 4-10)
5. According to the same specification cited in measure 4 above, Arizona Department of Transportation will ensure that, “The contractor shall take sufficient precautions, considering various conditions, to prevent pollution of streams, lakes, and reservoirs with fuels, oils, bitumens, calcium chloride, fresh Portland cement, raw sewage, muddy water, chemicals, or other harmful materials. None of these materials shall be discharged into any channels leading to such streams, lakes or reservoirs.” (DEA page 4-10)
6. According to Arizona Department of Transportation’s Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 107, Legal Relations and Responsibility to Public, Subsection 07, Sanitary, Health, and Safety Provisions*, contractor responsibilities are summarized as follows: Should the contractor encounter potential hazardous or contaminated material, the contractor shall immediately stop work and remove workers, barricade the area, provide traffic control and notify the Engineer. The Engineer will arrange for proper assessment, treatment, or disposal of those materials. Such locations shall be investigated and proper action implemented prior to the continuation of work in that location. (DEA page 4-42)

7. According to Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 1001, Material Sources, Subsection 2, General*, any material sources required for this project outside of the project area shall be examined by the contractor for environmental effects, prior to use, through a separate environmental analysis. (DEA pages 4-56 to 4-57)
8. According to Arizona Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (ADOT 2000), *Section 107, Legal Relations and Responsibility to Public,* *Subsection 11, "Protection and Restoration of Property and Landscape,* "Materials removed during construction operations such as trees, stumps, building materials, irrigation and drainage structures, broken concrete, and other similar materials shall not be dumped on either private or public property unless the contractor has obtained written permission from the owner or public agency with jurisdiction over the land. Written permission will not be required, however, when materials are disposed of at an operating, public dumping ground." (DEA page 4-57)

## 3.0 CHANGES TO THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In addition to the universal document changes described in Section 1.0, this section includes additions or alternations to the DEA to respond to public and agency comments, clarify, further discuss, or make text corrections. These changes are organized below with a reference to their section number and pages from the DEA. Deleted text is identified with strikethrough (~~strikethrough~~) and new or substituted text appears in *italics*.

### 2.2 Purpose and Need

[DEA pg. 2-2. Second to last sentence in first paragraph of section.] The study area for the proposed project has been comprehensively planned by the City of Phoenix *and City of Peoria*.

### 3.4.8 SR 303L Trail Accommodation

[DEA pg. 3-19. Table 3-5 has been modified to change certain sidewalk widths, as follows.]

<b>Table 3-5 Trail Crossings</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
Happy Valley Parkway	8-foot sidewalk plus 5-foot unpaved equestrian path under freeway
Twin Buttes Wash	10' x 12' CBC
Caterpillar Tank Wash	10' x 12' CBC
Lone Mountain/Dynamite Parkway	6-foot sidewalk and 6-foot bicycle/shoulder under freeway overpass
Agua Fria River	Under the Agua Fria Bridge (equestrians)
Lake Pleasant Parkway	6-foot sidewalk and 6-foot bicycle/shoulder on bridge over freeway
CAP Siphon	Under CAP Siphon Bridge (equestrians)
New River	Under New River Bridge
67 <sup>th</sup> Avenue ( <i>Pyramid Parkway</i> )	<del>6</del> -5-foot sidewalk and 6-foot bicycle/shoulder on bridge over freeway
Deadman Wash	Under Deadman Wash Bridge
51 <sup>st</sup> Avenue	<del>6</del> -5-foot sidewalk and 6-foot bicycle/shoulder on bridge over freeway

### 4.3.2 Wildlife

[DEA pg. 4-13. The following is added to the end of the first sentence.] *Numerous rodents, other small mammals, coyotes, lizards, and snake species are known to inhabit the project area.*

[DEA pg. 4-13. First sentence under “Impacts of the Proposed Project.”] Populations of animals will ~~not be significantly~~ affected by the proposed project.; ~~however,~~ Disturbance to individuals and elimination of components of wildlife habitat would occur during construction and include displacement of animals and possible mortality to burrowing animals.

[DEA pg. 4-13. "Mitigation" To lessen or avoid potential impacts to general wildlife in the project area, removal or disturbance of vegetation would be minimized through project design as practicable. ~~In areas where native vegetation must be removed, would restore to natural conditions by reseeding with species native to the area and replacing trees and shrubs with native species instead of landscaped exotic species. All disturbed soils, not landscaped or otherwise permanently stabilized by construction, will be seeded using species native to the project vicinity.~~ Culverts would be designed and sized to minimize the effects of habitat fragmentation by providing opportunities for movement of wildlife across the proposed project. As identified in the Design Concept Report (URS 2005b), culverts in the project area would range in size from ~~36~~ 24 inches to 10 feet by 12 feet. During final design, ADOT would coordinate with AGFD to ~~discuss address further concerns regarding~~ habitat connectivity *opportunities*. In addition, culvert sizes and locations may be modified to accommodate the final design of the project.

#### **4.3.4 Sensitive Species**

##### **Sonoran Desert Tortoise**

###### Mitigation

[DEA pg. 4-17.] Suitable Sonoran desert tortoise habitat exists in the project area; ~~therefore, mitigation measures may be needed.~~ The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) has developed guidelines to reduce potential impacts to desert tortoises, and to promote the continued existence of tortoises throughout the state. These guidelines apply to short-term projects such as roadway construction, *and include protocols for conducting pre-construction field surveys as well as relocation of tortoises encountered during construction.*

*The contractor shall employ a qualified biologist to complete a pre-construction survey for Sonoran Desert tortoise 48 hours prior to construction in areas that will be disturbed. Within 48 hours of survey completion, the contractor shall contact the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group at 602-712-7760 to provide survey results and arrange for delivery of survey documentation.*

AGFD's Guidelines for Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered on Development Projects is included as Appendix B. The contractor would adhere to provisions of the guidelines in the event that a tortoise is encountered during construction. Additionally, the sizing and installation of culverts and drainage structures, as discussed in Section 4.3.2, may provide opportunities to maintain habitat connectivity and reduce mortality from vehicle collisions during the life of the project. Culverts in the project area would range in size from ~~36~~ 24 inches to 10 feet by 12 feet.

[Add to DEA page 4-17] **Burrowing Owls**

*Burrowing owls are a species of special management concern to Arizona Game and Fish Department, and may occur in the project area. Burrowing owls typically occupy burrows on land near agricultural fields and undisturbed desert and grassland areas where vegetation is relatively sparse. Main impacts to owls, if present, would result from destruction of burrows and direct disturbance of the birds from noise associated with construction activity.*

#### Mitigation

*The contractor shall employ a qualified biologist permitted to complete a pre-construction survey for burrowing owl 48 hours prior to construction in areas that will be disturbed. Within 48 hours of survey completion the contractor shall contact the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group (602-712-7760) to provide survey results and arrange for delivery of survey documentation..*

*If any burrowing owls are located during the pre-construction survey, following notification of the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group, the contractor shall employ a biologist holding a permit from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to capture and remove all owls from the project area as appropriate.*

#### **4.5.1 Existing Conditions [Air Quality]**

[DEA pg. 4-27. Last two paragraphs have been modified as follows.] The Maricopa County ~~Environmental Services~~ Air Quality Department (*MCAQD*) (~~MCESD~~) has jurisdiction over air quality programs in Maricopa County, including the project area. The Maricopa County Air Pollution Control Rules & Regulations, developed by *MCAQD* ~~MCESD~~, also are applicable to the proposed project. These rules and regulations constitute the legal basis for control of air pollution sources in Maricopa County.

The ~~MCESD~~ *MCAQD* operates a series of air quality monitoring stations throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area.

#### **4.5.3 Mitigation [Air Quality]**

[DEA pg. 4-30. First full paragraph on the page has been modified as follows.] In addition, an Earth Moving Permit incorporating an agency-approved Dust Control Plan would be obtained prior to project construction phases under *MCAQD* ~~MCESD~~ Rules 200 and 310. By implementing the ADOT specifications and the requirements under *MCAQD* ~~MCESD~~ Rule 310,

the potential for air quality impacts related to roadway construction activities would be substantially reduced.

## **4.6 NOISE**

### **4.6.2 Impacts and Mitigation**

#### **Mitigation**

[DEA pg. 4-38. First paragraph under “Mitigation” has been updated as follows to incorporate standards outlined in the ADOT 2005 Noise Abatement Policy.] A 19-foot high and 2,500-foot-long (Station 1485+00 to Station 1510+00) noise barrier would be required to reduce traffic noise by at least 5 dBA and to a level of 63 dBA  $L_{eq}(h)$  or less at each impacted receiver. The estimated construction cost of the wall would be \$1.67 million at a cost of \$278,333 per benefited receiver. *ADOT’s revised 2005 policy provides for partial abatement (less than 5 dBA) if the sound barrier can achieve a reduction in the overall noise level to achieve the ADOT approach threshold of 64 dBA. Although five of the six affected receivers could be brought to below the noise abatement criterion with a noise reduction of 3 dBA, the estimated cost of construction of the required noise barrier wall would still significantly exceed ADOT’s cost limitations.* Since the cost per benefited receiver would exceed ~~\$35,000~~ \$43,000, the barrier is considered economically unreasonable per ADOT criteria and would not be constructed.

#### **4.6.3 Conclusion**

[DEA pg. 4-39. Paragraph has been modified as follows to incorporate standards outlined in the ADOT 2005 Noise Abatement Policy.] The sound levels at the six modeled receivers would approach or exceed the ADOT/FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (67 dBA  $L_{eq}$ ) as a result of the proposed project. Mitigation by use of a noise barrier would reduce traffic noise by at least 3 5 dBA. However, the cost per benefited receiver would exceed ~~\$35,000~~ \$43,000, and therefore the barrier is considered economically unreasonable and would not be constructed.

### **4.14 Cumulative Impacts**

[DEA pg. 4-60. In Table 4-10, the description of cumulative effects for the proposed action for noise is modified as follows.] Based on noise modeling, it is anticipated that six receivers (residences within 1,150 feet of the proposed freeway centerline) would experience sound levels that exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria or the approach criteria. The construction of a noise barrier was evaluated, and it was concluded that the estimated cost of the barrier would exceed ~~\$35,000~~ \$43,000 per benefited receiver. Therefore, the barrier is considered economically unreasonable and would not be constructed.

### 5.3 Hearing

[DEA pg. 5-11. This section is updated as follows.] A public hearing on the proposed project ~~reviewed in this DEA would be~~ was conducted on September 6, 2006 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Sandra Day O'Connor High School at 25250 North 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona. A summary of agency and public comments received following distribution of ~~this the~~ DEA, as well as ADOT responses, ~~would be~~ are provided in Appendix A of this document. ~~the final environmental document.~~ A transcript of the presentation made at the public hearing, as well as public comments and questions received, is included in Appendix B. Approximately 108 people attended the meeting, including 90 members of the public and 18 agency representatives. Five comment forms were returned and one person made a verbal comment directly to the court reporter. Following the hearing, four additional letters were received. The hearing began with an open house format, followed by a brief presentation and an opportunity for people to ask questions. Following questions from the audience, the meeting returned to the open house format where project representatives were available to explain the project and answer questions in a one-on-one setting.

*Comments from the public were generally supportive of the project, emphasizing the need to construct the SR303L sooner rather than later to address already congested traffic in the area. One resident in the area posed questions on sound and light mitigation as well as air quality impacts. Comments from agencies primarily were regarding wildlife, including habitat connectivity and potential mitigation measures. Comments regarding future compliance with the Clean Water Act also were received.*



**APPENDIX A**

**PUBLIC & AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED ON  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
AND  
ADOT RESPONSES**

## APPENDIX A – PUBLIC & AGENCY COMMENTS AND ADOT RESPONSES

Comment #	Comment	Response
<b>Agency Comments</b>		
<b>A1</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> Suggest gaps in wall for small animals to get through.	Retaining walls would not contain gaps, nor could animals pass through them. The right-of-way will be fenced with standard Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) chain link material. Animal crossings are provided for in the wash and river bridges and culverts.
<b>A2</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> Use of word “would” instead of “shall” connotes a more optional action is allowed.	As noted in Section 3.0 of this Final Environmental Assessment (FEA), all uses of the verb "would" are changed to "will" when referring to the proposed project and selected alternative. In addition, all references to “would” in connection with the contractor’s responsibilities have been changed to “shall.”
<b>A3</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> “Offsite” drainages emphasize/address water quality of roadway runoff into a natural wash.	As noted on Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) page 8, a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit will be required and will be prepared prior to the start of construction. This permit will discuss and address water quality of roadway runoff into natural washes.
<b>A4</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> “Wildlife” Make note that numerous rodents, other small mammals, coyotes, lizards, snake species are known to inhabit the project area.	Addition has been incorporated into this FEA as noted in Section 3.0.
<b>A5</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> Suggest a survey for Burrowing Owls and their removal/relocation prior to start of construction.	Pre-construction surveys to identify the presence of sensitive species, including burrowing owls, have been added as a mitigation measure in Section 2.0 of this FEA, and revised text is included in Section 3.0.
<b>A6</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> Not all wildlife will universally use culverts of a specific size.	Comment noted. As identified in the Design Concept Report, culverts in the project area would range in size from 24 inches to 10 feet by 12 feet. Mitigation included in Section 2.0 of this FEA, states that ADOT will coordinate with AGFD during final design to address habitat connectivity opportunities.
<b>A7</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> “The Species” The Bald Eagle has been delisted.	According the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as of October 11, 2006 the bald eagle has not been delisted, although the process to delist the species has begun.
<b>A8</b>	<b>Diana Stuart, Flood Control District of Maricopa County:</b> “Summary Conclusion” Suggest a biologist walk ahead of earth movers at start of construction to remove and relocate desert tortoise	Pre-construction surveys to identify the presence of sensitive species, including Sonoran desert tortoise, have been added as a mitigation measure in Section 2.0 of this FEA and revised text is included in

<b>Comment #</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
	per AZGF guidelines.	Section 3.0.
<b>A9</b>	<b>David Moody, Engineering Director, City of Peoria</b> – yes – Peoria supports the L303 as presented in the DCR including segment 5 to SR 74.	Comment noted.
<b>A10</b>	<b>Craig Sepplefrick, MCDOT</b> – Replace MCESD with MC Air Quality Department.	Change has been incorporated into this FEA as noted in Section 3.0.
<b>Public Hearing Transcript Comments 9-06-06 (See transcript in Appendix B)</b>		
<b>T1</b>	I'm a citizen of Sun City. I am a director on the Sun City Homeowner's Association, and I am the chairman in charge of the traffic transportation section of the Homeowner's association. We out at Sun City feel that this is a definite must for Sun City traffic – to get the traffic around Sun City rather than Through Sun City. Sun City is an entity in itself and should not have traffic transfers through the City.	Comment noted.
<b>T2</b>	Are you indicating anymore what interchanges will be put along the route from where it begins to where it terminates?	There are nine service interchanges planned on 303L. Existing streets are Happy Valley Road at the south end and Lake Pleasant Road. There are seven planned streets that will have interchanges in the future. There is a system interchange near the New River crossing to provide a spur connection to Carefree Highway. Along I-17 there are three service interchanges at Dove Valley Road, Lone Mountain Road, and Dixileta Drive, and the freeway-to-freeway interchange (303L/I-17).
<b>T3</b>	It's pointed out here, looked like most of this is covered land. Where is all this development, all these residential developments going to be?	Most of the land is State Trust land managed by the Arizona State Land Department in accordance with the Arizona Constitution. The land is to be developed or used to generate the maximum return to the Trust. It is expected that these state lands will be planned for development in the future. Funds from the sale or development of this land go into the public school system. Some of the hills in the State Trust lands may be preserved for park land. Planned development in the project area has been, or will be, coordinated with the City of Peoria and City of Phoenix. Parcels managed by the Federal government, such as a small part of a Bureau of Land Management land and the Central Arizona Project, will not be developed.
<b>T4</b>	Do you know whether Happy Valley Road will be connected from where it is at Lake Pleasant Road over to I-17?	Yes. The City of Peoria has bought the right-of-way this year and will start construction next year or the year after (in two and a half years).

<b>Comment #</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>T5</b>	Are <you> going to be connecting the surface streets to the freeway as <you> build the free way? (as paraphrased by T.Bourland)	Happy Valley Road will connect to I-17. If the street exists or is being constructed by the local agency we will build the portion within the interchange area. Funding is provided through an interagency agreement with the local agency.
<b>T6</b>	So you're saying when they first finish the freeway, there will be actually no access on there for a while?	If the connecting streets exist or are under construction, the interchange will be built where planned. ADOT does not expect any new streets to be built to meet the 2008-2010 schedule for initial construction of Loop 303. Phoenix does not currently have plans to construct 51 <sup>st</sup> or 67 <sup>th</sup> avenues in that timeframe. Peoria may have Lone Mountain/ Dynamite Parkway under construction. Loop 303 will be built along the future ramp alignments using temporary pavement so that the interchange can be built at a later date.
<b>T7</b>	How will construction impact current traffic?	Along most of this corridor there is no current traffic, so that Loop 303 can be built largely without interfering with traffic.. There are three places where traffic issues may arise. Traffic on I-17 is likely to be affected by future improvements to that highway. A separate project to widen I-17 will be completed before this Loop 303 project. Provisions for the addition of Loop 303 interchanges are being made in the design of the I-17 project. Construction traffic control plans will be developed in the final design and construction phases of these projects. Another place is at Lake Pleasant Road, where a plan has been developed to detour Lake Pleasant Road so the interchange can be built. Happy Valley Road is the third location. Construction here can take place with standard procedures.
<b>T8</b>	Were there any environmental concerns?	The DEA describes environmental concerns for this project. Mitigation measures that will be implemented are shown in Section 2.0 of this FEA. Federal Highway Administration has determined that the project will not result in significant environmental impacts.
<b>Emailed Comments (Citizen)</b>		
<b>E1</b>	The Estrella Freeway has been a great bypass for many people. So much so that at the 303 and Happy Valley/Vistancia Blvd. intersection the traffic grows each day. Because of this it has become a potentially dangerous intersection. I live in Vistancia and sometimes feel I'm taking a big chance turning left at the intersection. It is only going to get worse. More people are using the 303 as a cutoff from Lake Pleasant Rd. to the west side and more people are moving into the Vistancia developments. Please address	Mr. Steve Beasely, Project Manager at Arizona Department of Transportation, has addressed this concern directly with the commenter. The interim SR303 was recently transferred from Maricopa County Department of Transportation to ADOT responsibility.

Comment #	Comment	Response
	this problem. It cannot wait several years for the proposed alignment. When Happy Valley Rd. is extended to the I-17 the situation will only get worse. We need stop signs until a signal can be put in. It is actually a more dangerous intersection than the 303 and Grand Ave. was before the signal was installed.	
<b>Public Hearing Comment Form (Citizen)</b>		
<b>P1</b>	I have a question about the impact to the communities north of Happy Valley and east of the proposed alignment of loop 303. What will happen to privately owned properties in the study group area and what considerations are being taken concerning the limited road conditions and what is being done for noise abatement for those communities.	The proposed alignment of 303L was developed to avoid impact to the existing roadways serving the residential community east of 115 <sup>th</sup> Avenue. A noise analysis was conducted as part of the environmental assessment. Future noise levels may exceed the ADOT mitigation threshold; however, the cost of mitigation far exceeds ADOT's cost effectiveness policy. No mitigation is planned.
<b>P2</b>	Looks like a very good plan to me - well thought out for growth.	Comment noted.
<b>P3</b>	Let's do it! Don't forget the spur from Route 74 Carefree Highway to New River exit of I-17 It may be required sooner than we think.	Comment noted.
<b>P4</b>	Let's get moving with this project; you don't need to talk about growth; have you seen the current traffic congestions spewing exhaust into the air we breathe?	Comment noted.
<b>P5</b>	Let's get going. Put completion incentives in the contracts. 2010 is too long to wait for this!	Comment noted.
<b>P6</b>	Please create the sound baffle walls not sound reflecting walls. Please keep with the low light/desert night desires of the residential population. What air pollution measures will be in place to take care of the concentration of CO and other emissions that will be brought into this contained (by mountains which create a valley) area?	No sound walls are planned based on noise analyses conducted for this project. As noted in the DEA, maximum total 1-hour and 8-hour CO concentrations are well below the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (DEA p.4-29). Additionally, to minimize emissions from idling and slow moving traffic in the construction zones, traffic control would be in accordance with all applicable State and Federal guidelines (DEA p.4-30). The lighting concept will be prepared in the Stage II plan development and refined in Stage III. Minimizing lighting spillover near residential areas is a factor in lighting design procedures.

**APPENDIX B**

**PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT**

1 ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
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3  
4 IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTRELLA )  
FREEWAY, SR 303L, HAPPY VALLEY ) PUBLIC COMMENTS  
5 ROAD TO I-17. )  
6 \_\_\_\_\_ )

7  
8  
9 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
10 September 6, 2006  
11 Glendale, Arizona

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14  
15  
16  
17 ARIZONA REPORTING SERVICE, INC.  
18 Court Reporting  
Suite Three  
19 2627 North Third Street  
20 Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1126

21  
22  
23  
24 Prepared for: BY: LISA A. HUMBEUTEL, RPR, CRR  
25 AZ CR No. 50599

1	PRESENTATION	PAGE
2	By Mr. French	6
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1                   BE IT REMEMBERED that the above-entitled  
2           matter was held on behalf of the Arizona Department  
3           of Transportation, at the Sandra Day O'Connor High  
4           School, 25250 North 35th Avenue, Glendale, Arizona,  
5           commencing at 6:30 p.m., on the 6th day of  
6           September, 2006.

7

8           APPEARANCES:

9                   Terry Bourland, AZ Department of Transportation  
                  Dave French, URS Project Manager  
10                  Debra Duerr, URS Sr. Environmental Planer  
                  Matt Burdick, ADOT Community Relations

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21                               LISA A. BLANKS, RPR, CRR  
22                               Certified Court Reporter  
                                  Certificate No. 50599

23

24

25

1 MR. BOURLAND: Good evening. Welcome to the  
2 Route 303 Public Hearing. My name is Terry Bourland, on  
3 behalf of the Arizona Department of Transportation and  
4 the 303 study team. We welcome you.

5 There's a few people I'd like to introduce as  
6 part of the team. Dave French is the project manager  
7 for the design team. Debra Duerr is the environmental  
8 specialist for ERS. Lyndy Long is back by the sign-in  
9 sheet. She's with the ERS. Josiah Roberts is over  
10 here. Josiah is the project engineer for the project.

11 We have Lisa Blanks here as the court  
12 reporter. Sue Lewin is with Engineering Alliance, and  
13 she's going to be talking to you a little bit later  
14 about some public meetings that are going to be coming  
15 up on I-17 in this area. There's about four of them  
16 this month. We have Dan Lance, with the State  
17 Engineer's Office.

18 Steve Beasley, ADOT project manager. Steve's  
19 right in the back. Dave Edwards with ADOT right-of-way  
20 groups. We have Elizabeth Ridgely with ADOT  
21 environmental group. She's back in the back.

22 Perry Powell, our Phoenix district  
23 construction engineer. He's here somewhere. I saw him  
24 earlier. And Jim Hampshire with Phoenix Construction  
25 District.

1           Also Bill Hahn has been part of our team.  
2   He's with Maricopa County. Don Herp, City of Phoenix,  
3   Don's been part of the team. Dave Moody, City of  
4   Peoria, in the back, part of the team. Bob Dorr  
5   representing the City of Glendale is here.

6           Sharon Gordon, our other partner with FHWA and  
7   Matt Burdick right here with ADOT community relations,  
8   along with Beth and Bill's favorite friend Doug Nintzel.  
9   And I don't know where Doug's at.

10           Matt has a little thing to provide some  
11   information for some upcoming meetings just on I-17  
12   alone that you may want to know.

13           MR. BURDICK: Thank you, Terry. Can everybody  
14   hear me okay? I'll try and speak loudly. Tonight  
15   obviously we're talking about the 303 and all of the  
16   information that goes along with that.

17           Obviously I-17 is another big issue in this  
18   area. So I want to make you aware of a few meetings  
19   that are coming up. September 19th we'll be here at  
20   6:00 o'clock, from 6:00 to 8:30, open house kind of  
21   format with a presentation. We'll give you an update as  
22   far as the project. We'll be here on the 19th from 6:00  
23   to 8:30.

24           On the 21st, we'll be up at Anthem at the  
25   Anthem Community Center, same time, 6:00 to 8:30, and

1 then on the 28th, we'll be at Desert Mountain Middle  
2 School. The same information will be presented at all  
3 three meetings, but I want to make that comment.

4 If your questions deal with I-17, either see  
5 myself or some of the folks in the back. I wanted to  
6 make you aware of the three different meetings that are  
7 coming up.

8 MR. BOURLAND: Thank you, Matt.

9 Also, we have present Representative Pamela  
10 Gordon.

11 I'd like to turn it over to Dave French.  
12 Dave's going to kind of take you through the process  
13 that we've been through.

14 I was looking through some paperwork today and  
15 these studies don't happen overnight. They were  
16 actually given notice to proceed in March of '02, on  
17 this project, so it's been underway for quite some time  
18 and Dave will fill you in on where we've been.

19

20 PRESENTATION

21

22 MR. FRENCH: Thanks, Terry.

23 First of all, the purpose of this meeting is  
24 to present to you the preferred alignment and concept  
25 that we've developed for Loop 303. We have been through

1 a couple of public meetings in the past and this concept  
2 has revolved about over a four-year period so we're here  
3 tonight to present to you those final recommendations  
4 and get your final comments so we can wrap everything  
5 up.

6 We have prepared an environmental assessment,  
7 and this hearing is largely directed at getting your  
8 comment on that environmental assessment. So that's the  
9 purpose of the court reporter, so we can get your  
10 comments recorded specifically so they can be addressed  
11 and we can finalize our document. Getting your comments  
12 is one of the biggest reasons for this evening, so  
13 that's a good part that we want to talk about later.

14 The proposed project is specifically from  
15 Happy Valley Road to I-17 along the 303 alignment. It  
16 will also include a system interchange, a  
17 freeway-to-freeway interchange between 303 and I-17, and  
18 it includes three interchanges on I-17 at Dixileta  
19 Drive, Lone Mountain Road, and Dove Valley.

20 So all of those are part of this proposed  
21 project and part of the environmental assessments that  
22 we have prepared.

23 The project purpose -- the Estrella Freeway is  
24 part of the regional freeway system and that system plan  
25 is shown on the first board on that side of the room

1 back there so you can see the overall system plan that  
2 has been developed by the Maricopa Association of  
3 Governments.

4 It will connect the northwest part of the  
5 metropolitan area, Surprise, Peoria to the north central  
6 part of Phoenix, and that's one of its main purposes, to  
7 make that connection. It will provide a link to I-17 by  
8 giving an alternative route as you move into the  
9 metropolitan area.

10 It will provide a safe route because it will  
11 be designed and built through the latest standards for  
12 urban freeways which incorporate all of the safety  
13 elements.

14 We will supplement the plan's arterial system  
15 that has been developed by the City of Peoria and  
16 Phoenix, and because of all the rivers and washes and  
17 mountains, it's a fairly limited road system in the  
18 area, so having a freeway to supplement that arterial  
19 system will be necessary to meet the long-term needs of  
20 this area and to accommodate the future development  
21 that's expected to occur north of Loop 101.

22 The need for the project, we expect about  
23 300,000 more people to live north of Happy Valley Road  
24 and up towards Carefree Highway in the next 25 years.

25 As I mentioned, that limited arterial system,

1 we need to supplement that system because of the number  
2 of people that will be living here.

3 I-17 will be widened and widened soon, but  
4 even with that and all the expected growth, it's going  
5 to get congested again. So we need to supplement that  
6 I-17 system.

7 Same with 74, it's currently just a two-lane  
8 rural highway and there's no specific plans to widen  
9 that or program plans to widen that. So we need  
10 additional capacity in the area.

11 Loop 101 is seven miles south of the proposed  
12 alignment of 303 so it's a long way from 303. It's a  
13 big gap in the freeway system.

14 If we secure the right-of-way soon, then the  
15 urban development can develop around it that's  
16 compatible with the freeway rather than trying to put a  
17 freeway through an area that's already developed and we  
18 get some incompatibility.

19 This way you can plan the urban development  
20 along with the freeway system and have a win-win. The  
21 important part of the overall -- it's a very important  
22 part of the overall freeway system as you see from the  
23 regional freeway map.

24 It's an integral part of the overall system,  
25 so to leave it out would make the overall system not

1 work as well.

2 The process we've gone through started in  
3 2002. We had a meeting with all of the affected  
4 agencies, the cities, the counties, a lot of the federal  
5 land agency, the Central Arizona Project, and so forth,  
6 to get the project started.

7 We had a public scoping meeting in February of  
8 2003. We had an agency scoping meeting. Following that  
9 we had a field review, which in this area is kind of a  
10 tough challenge because there's no real roads through  
11 this corridor.

12 We went through some lengthy alignment  
13 studies. We had a public information meeting then in  
14 November of 2003, to look at alternative alignments, and  
15 from that we have selected preferred.

16 We prepared a design concept for that roadway  
17 in that preferred location and that's what we're  
18 presenting tonight, and we have prepared two draft  
19 environmental assessments which has broken the project  
20 into two parts. So we have two assessments and we'd  
21 like the comment on both of those and we can distinguish  
22 which part you're talking about.

23 So item number 10 tonight, the public hearing,  
24 and after this, we'll finalize the environmental  
25 assessment, the DCR and move forward to design and



1 construction.

2 This part shows kind of the process  
3 graphically what we've been through, the road system  
4 study, the alignment study, the preparation of the ECR  
5 and the EA.

6 So we're here at where the arrow is in the  
7 public hearing. And following this, we finalize the EA  
8 and the ECR. The state transportation boards then  
9 adopts the alignment, puts it in into the five-year  
10 program and we move into design and construction.

11 That will happen in a very compressed time  
12 based on the current plans today. So we're planning to  
13 move very, very fast from this point on.

14 What we're proposing is to ultimately have a  
15 four-lane freeway, four lanes in each direction plus an  
16 HOV lane, so basically five lanes in each direction is  
17 the ultimate plan.

18 The right-of-way would be, as a minimum, about  
19 300 feet wide, but in many places it will be much wider  
20 than that where we have interchanges, where we have  
21 greater structures that we have to accommodate within  
22 the right-of-way. So 300, 600 feet wide in some places.

23 The initial roadway that is planned to be  
24 designed and constructed soon would have two and in some  
25 cases three lanes in each direction, and the others

1 would be added at some later date.

2 The MAG plan currently has money programmed to  
3 have a total of three lanes in each direction by 2025.

4 So we would be adding some lanes in the next  
5 ten years as well.

6 We expect to buy all the right-of-way through  
7 the initial part of the construction so we wouldn't have  
8 to come back later and buy more right-of-way.

9 The money that has been set aside in the MAG  
10 plan and the start of the Proposition 400 passed in  
11 November of 2004 allocates \$250 million between 2006 and  
12 2010 and another \$395 million from 2011 to 2015. That  
13 money is to cover everything from I-17 over to Grand  
14 Avenue or U.S. 60. So this is only a portion of that  
15 overall project.

16 The latest cost estimates that we have  
17 prepared, these are about a year old, about \$319 million  
18 for the initial construction, another \$160 million to  
19 get it to three lanes in each direction.

20 Then the right-of-way would be all in the  
21 first part. These processes, like I said, are about a  
22 year, year old, and with the acceleration of  
23 construction costs, I'm sure the numbers will be higher  
24 than this when we get to actual construction.

25 At this point it looks like there is budget to

1 build the initial roadway and that's what's planned to  
2 be done.

3 And now, I would like to turn it over to Debra  
4 Duerr to talk about the environmental assessment.

5 MS. DUERR: Good evening, everybody. Thanks  
6 for coming. It's a really good turnout.

7 I want to point you to the newsletter that we  
8 have here and also the comment forms.

9 Where we are in this process is at a draft  
10 stage of our environmental assessment. So that means it  
11 hasn't been finalized yet. And one of the reasons that  
12 we're having this meeting tonight is to make sure that  
13 anybody who has any comments on the environmental  
14 assessment or on the project itself has an opportunity  
15 to let us know what those comments, suggestions,  
16 concerns, problems are, because we want to address those  
17 if we can.

18 And the next phase of the study, I think as  
19 Dave pointed out in his flow chart, is that we'll  
20 prepare a final version of the environmental assessment  
21 that will address your comments.

22 I think I'm taking my slides out of order.  
23 But on the newsletter, if you would like to review the  
24 environmental assessment, there are hard copies of it in  
25 two libraries. That's the Phoenix Public Library,

1 Juniper Branch, 1825 West Union Hills Drive, or the  
2 Peoria Public Library, Sunrise Mountain Branch, 21200  
3 North 83rd Avenue, or at the Arizona Department of  
4 Transportation Environmental Planning Group's office  
5 downtown at 17th Avenue.

6 Or it's available electronically on ADOT's  
7 website that's also listed on this newsletter.

8 If none of these options work for you, please  
9 see me after the meeting and we'll figure out another  
10 way for you to be able to look at the document if you'd  
11 like to. The other way you can comment is to fill out  
12 these forms tonight.

13 You can also mail these back if you don't want  
14 to do it tonight. You can send your own written  
15 comments to me. My address again is also on the  
16 newsletter. Or if you feel more comfortable being more  
17 official, we have a court reporter here, and please sit  
18 down with her and give her any comments that you would  
19 like to.

20 I want to clarify on the sign-in sheet the  
21 matter of the public record. Everybody who is here  
22 tonight and signed in, those sign-in sheets are part of  
23 the public record. So I understand there's maybe a  
24 little bit of confusion about that because we had a  
25 check box on there.

1           It's not a mailing list. It's just to  
2   indicate that you came to this hearing tonight. And we  
3   probably won't be sending out too many further materials  
4   on this project, so it's not a mailing list you'd  
5   receive further information on, but there will be a  
6   final environmental assessment that will come out after  
7   we incorporate all the comments that we hear tonight.

8           These are the issues that we have looked at in  
9   the environmental studies for this project, and they  
10   cover a whole suite of what we would call environmental  
11   concerns and also the human side of the issues that we  
12   know people are generally concerned about.

13           And those would be how close is it to  
14   residences, how close is it to existing and planned  
15   developments, and what might the impacts be on those  
16   developments.

17           I know I've talked to a couple of people here  
18   tonight who are building homes in the area and have some  
19   concerns about that. The majority of the alignment is  
20   on state land. So it isn't developed yet, but there are  
21   some residential developments going on in the area.

22           So we look at air quality. We look at noise  
23   impacts because there aren't -- except for one very  
24   small area along the alignment, there aren't too many  
25   residences that are close enough to look at for noise

1 mitigation.

2           So right now that's not a consideration. We  
3 look at the more scientific environmental concerns like  
4 biology, archeological and historical resources. We've  
5 done surveys for those. We look at the impacts of the  
6 project -- washes and rivers, and it crosses a lot of  
7 washes and a lot of water.

8           And so part of the way Dave and his folks have  
9 designed the project is to allow, of course, for the  
10 water to flow through but also to allow wildlife to move  
11 through and under the culverts that are part of this  
12 project.

13           Because one of the issues we were concerned  
14 about was cutting off wildlife corridors and wildlife  
15 movement, and also the desert -- the kind of small  
16 wildlife, but they do exist in the area, and there are  
17 issues of concerns for the state of Arizona.

18           Hazardous materials, that's typically done as  
19 part of these projects to see if there's any hazardous  
20 materials or dump sites that might occur which would  
21 present problems for public safety or for construction  
22 worker safety.

23           We look at visual resources and how it's going  
24 to fit into the environment around it, and land  
25 ownership, existing and planned land uses. I mentioned

1 before that's one of the big concerns that people  
2 typically have.

3 So if you have ideas or concerns about any of  
4 those issues, again, please let us know, and if we need  
5 to do more investigation on anything that you might be  
6 concerned about, that's part of the reason that we're  
7 here. That's part of the reason we're not calling this  
8 document final yet, because there may be some other  
9 things.

10 So we appreciate your input. Thanks.

11 MR. FRENCH: Okay. What's next is that we  
12 will review the comments that you make tonight. So that  
13 again is a very important step tonight, is to get your  
14 comments through the reporter on paper or send them back  
15 in to us so that we get something in writing that we can  
16 address specifically, and it becomes part of the public  
17 record.

18 So finalizing the document, and then the State  
19 of Transportation will act -- the next engineering stage  
20 is already underway on portions of the project. We  
21 expect to complete that later this year and then  
22 construction is scheduled to start in 2008, and open for  
23 traffic about two years later in 2010.

24 As I said, from this point on we expect to  
25 move very fast for this project and have a road that you

1 can all use and enjoy.

2 So we'd like now to just end the presentation.  
3 We will go back to the boards, and if you have some  
4 specific comments or questions on the project that we  
5 can answer them better at the board than we can probably  
6 talking abstractly here, Debra will be over at the  
7 environmental board, if you have specific questions  
8 there.

9 The court reporter is here ready for you to  
10 make your comments and statements there, but I will open  
11 it up now for a few minutes for general questions that  
12 might help your understanding of the overall project.

13 So any general questions that you have at this  
14 point?

15 QUESTION: Are you indicating anymore what  
16 interchanges will be put along the route from where it  
17 begins to where it terminates?

18 MR. FRENCH: Yes, they're shown specifically  
19 on our drawings back there. There are nine service  
20 interchanges. And as you know, the only existing  
21 streets are Happy Valley Road at the south end, Lake  
22 Pleasant Road, and then there will be planned streets  
23 that we have shown interchangeably, a total of nine.

24 And then there is a system interchange near  
25 the New River crossing, with kind of a stirrup to



1 Carefree Highway. And then the interchanges along I-17  
2 that I mentioned earlier, the three service  
3 interchanges, and then the freeway-to-freeway  
4 interchange. So those are all shown on the drawings.

5 QUESTION: It's pointed out here, looked like  
6 most of this is covered land. Where is all this  
7 development, all these residential developments going to  
8 be?

9 MR. FRENCH: Most of the land is state trust  
10 land managed by the State Land Department and  
11 specifically by the Arizona Constitution. It's to be  
12 developed or used to generate the maximum revenue, it  
13 goes into the public school system funding.

14 So it is all scheduled for development. All  
15 the state trust land is scheduled for development.  
16 There are a few parcels owned by some federal agencies  
17 that are specifically identified.

18 I think we nipped one little part of a Bureau  
19 of Land Management parcel that we do talk about. We do  
20 cross the Central Arizona Project. But yes, the State  
21 trust lands are all expected to be developed.

22 Maybe some of the hills would be preserved for  
23 park land. But, yes, there's a lot of development and  
24 it's been coordinated with the City of Peoria and the  
25 City of Phoenix as to what that development will be.

1                   QUESTION: Do you know if Happy Valley Road is  
2 going to be -- from Peoria to I-17 prior to the  
3 completion of -- (inaudible).

4                   MR. FRENCH: The question is whether Happy  
5 Valley Road will be connected from where it is at Lake  
6 Pleasant Road over to I-17.

7                   That would be a City of Phoenix, I believe  
8 project -- Peoria.

9                   Dave or Tom, would you like to address that  
10 issue? Happy Valley Road, will it be extended through  
11 so it connects to I-17?

12                  UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, we bought the  
13 right-of-way this year and we'll start construction next  
14 year or the year after. So in two and a half years.

15                  (Question inaudible)

16                  MR. FRENCH: Yes, in fact we have been  
17 studying that as well. It's a separate project. It's  
18 not part of the MAG plan at this time, only as a study  
19 corridor. We had a public meeting in 2005, I believe in  
20 Anthem.

21                  It's called the New River Freeway, and it will  
22 continue from that point at Carefree Highway, kind of  
23 diagonally up, and going with I-17 about a mile and a  
24 half or so north of the New River interchange. So that  
25 is part of, sort of a long term plan.

1                   We hope to get it planned out. Again, that's  
2 all state trust land, and we hope to get that reserved  
3 so that development occurs up there -- we can preserve  
4 the right-of-ways.

5                   (Question inaudible)

6                   MR. BOURLAND: The question is are we going to  
7 be connecting the surface streets to the freeway as we  
8 build the freeway.

9                   And to a certain extent, we'll build past the  
10 freeway, but that would be -- there's a certain area  
11 that we go up, and then beyond that, the cities will  
12 build it. Most likely they'll let us build it with the  
13 freeway and they'll fund it.

14                  QUESTION: So you're saying when they first  
15 finish the freeway, there will be actually no access on  
16 there for a while?

17                  MR. FRENCH: Yes, we do not think that the  
18 City will be prepared to build those streets in most  
19 cases by the time the freeway gets built in 2008 to  
20 2010. So there would not be a street connection --  
21 there's not one planned in that time period of 51st or  
22 67th.

23                  And I believe over in Peoria they are planning  
24 to have the Lone Mountain Dynamite Parkway ready to  
25 connect to. So they are planning a couple there. It's

1 kind of a moving target, as you know, with the  
2 development going on out there.

3 So if the City has the street under  
4 construction and ready to go, then the interchange will  
5 get built.

6 Otherwise, there will be sort of a -- we'll  
7 build a temporary roadway kind of along the ramp, ramp  
8 alignment. So that the interchange can be built at a  
9 later date.

10 QUESTION: How will construction impact  
11 current traffic?

12 MR. FRENCH: Well, for most of this road there  
13 is no traffic. You have two places where you have to  
14 worry about that. One is I-17. That's a big concern.  
15 The widening of I-17 will occur in advance of this  
16 construction, and there, they're making provisions to  
17 make this connection into that I-17 widening.

18 The other place is at Lake Pleasant Road, and  
19 we've developed a plan for detouring Lake Pleasant Road  
20 so you can build the interchange. And of course at  
21 Happy Valley Road, that's also another connecting.

22 So those are fairly normal things. So this  
23 road can be built largely without interfering with  
24 traffic because there is no traffic out there today.

25 QUESTION: Were there any environmental

1 concerns --

2 MR. FRENCH: He asked if there were any  
3 environmental concerns, and we have not found any so  
4 far.

5 There are issues that we dealt with as  
6 mitigation measures that have been addressed, but we've  
7 not found anything that has caused any great concern.

8 Okay. I'd like now just to end the  
9 presentation part of it.

10 If you have specific questions and want to  
11 know more about the specific project, I'll meet you back  
12 at the board. Debra will meet you over at the  
13 environmental board and the court reporter is ready and  
14 waiting for you.

15 Thank you for attending tonight and good luck.

16

17 PUBLIC COMMENTS

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19 MR. BOURNE: My name is Gary Bourne,  
20 B-O-U-R-N-E. I'm a citizen of Sun City. I am a  
21 director on the Sun City Homeowners Association, and I  
22 am the chairman in charge of the traffic transportation  
23 section of the homeowners association.

24 We out at Sun City feel that this is a  
25 definite must for Sun City traffic -- to get the traffic

1 around Sun City rather than through Sun City. Sun City  
2 is an entity in itself and should not have traffic  
3 transfers in through the city.

4 (PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC COMMENTS  
5 CONCLUDED AT 7:30 P.M.)

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1 STATE OF ARIZONA )  
 ) ss:  
2 COUNTY OF MARICOPA )

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5 I, LISA BLANKS, Certified Court Reporter  
6 No. 50599 for the State of Arizona, do hereby  
7 certify that the foregoing pages constitute a full,  
8 true, and accurate transcript of the proceedings had  
9 in the foregoing matter, all done to the best of my  
10 skill and ability.

11

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13 DATED this 15th day of September, 2006.

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16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 Lisa A. Blanks  
Certificate No. 50599

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